

A. N. Bonhile

THE LAY-MAN'S MAGAZINE.

"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND—AND THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."

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THE YOUNG COTTAGER.

*By the author of the
DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER.
[Concluded.]*

PART V.

Her mother observed that she would now probably remain insensible for some time before she recovered.

I improved this interval in a serious address to the woman, and then prepared to take my departure, perceiving that Jane was too much exhausted for farther conversation at that time.

As I was leaving the room, the child said faintly, "Come again soon, Sir; my time is very short."

I returned home by the same retired road which I had before chosen. I silently meditated on the eminent proofs of piety and faith which were just afforded me in the scene I had witnessed.

Surely, I thought, this is an extraordinary child! What cannot grace accomplish? Is it possible to doubt, after this, who is alone the Author and Finisher of salvation? or from whom cometh every good and perfect gift? How rich and free is the mercy of Jehovah! Hath not he "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty? Let no flesh glory in his presence; but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

PART VI.

THE truth and excellence of the religion of Jesus Christ appears to be remarkably established by the union of similarity with variety, in the effects which it produces on the hearts and lives of true believers. In the grand and essential features of Chris-

tian experience, the whole household of God possess a universal sameness of character, a family likeness, which distinguishes them from all the world besides: yet, in numerous particulars, there also exists a beautiful variety.

On the one hand, in the aged and the young, in the wise and the unlearned, in the rich and the poor; in those of stronger and weaker degrees of mental capacity, in more sanguine or more sedate dispositions; and in a multitude of otherwise varying circumstances, there is a striking conformity of principles and feeling to Christ, and to each other. Like the flowers of the field and the garden, they are "all rooted and grounded" in the soil of the same earth; they are warmed by the same sun, refreshed by the same air, and watered by the same dews. They each derive nourishment, growth, and increase from the same life-giving source. As the flower puts forth its leaves and petals, adorns the place which it inhabits with its beauty, and possesses an internal system of qualities, whereby it is enabled to bring forth its seed or fruit in the appointed season; so does the Christian.

But, on the other hand, like the flowers also, some Christians may be said to grow on the mountain tops, some in valleys, some in the waters, and others in dry ground. Different colours, forms, and sizes distinguish them from each other, and produce a diversity of character and appearance, which affords a delightful variety, both for the purposes of use and beauty. Yet is that variety perfectly consistent with their essential unity of nature in the vegetable kingdom, to which they all equally belong.

In another particular they likewise

resemble. They both die a natural death. The Lord ever preserves "a seed to serve him," from generation to generation; for as one disappears, another springs up to supply his place. But, "it is appointed unto all men once to die.—Man cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not."—"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away."

In the midst of such diversity of Christian characters there is much to love and admire. I have selected the case of little Jane as one not undeserving of notice.

It is true, she was only a child—a very poor child—but a child saved by divine grace, enlightened with the purest knowledge, and adorned with unaffected holiness;—she was a child, humble, meek, and lowly. She "found grace in the eyes of the Lord," while she was on earth; and, I doubt not, will be seen on his right hand at the last day. As such, there is preciousness in the character, which will account for my attempting once more to write concerning her, and describe her last moments, before she went to her final rest.

At a very early hour on the morning of the following day, I was awoke by the arrival of a messenger, bringing an earnest request that I would immediately go to the child, as her end appeared to be just approaching.

It was not yet day when I left my house to obey the summons. The morning star shone conspicuously clear. The moon cast a mild light over the prospect, but gradually diminished in brightness, as the eastern sky became enlightened. The birds were beginning their song, and seemed to welcome the sun's approach. The dew plentifully covered the field, and hung suspended in drops from the trees and hedges. A few early labourers appeared in the lanes, travelling towards the scene of their daily

occupations.

All besides was still and calm. My mind, as I proceeded, was deeply exercised by thoughts concerning the affecting events which I expected soon to witness.

The rays of the morning star were not so beautiful in my sight as the spiritual lustre of this young Christian's character. Her "night was far spent;" The sun of eternal blessedness was ready to break upon her soul with rising glory. Like the moon, which I saw above me, this child's exemplary deportment had gently cast a useful light over the neighbourhood where she dwelt. Like this moon, she had for a season been permitted to shine amidst the surrounding darkness; and her rays were also reflected from a luminary, in whose original splendour her own would quickly be blended and lost.

The air was cool, but the breezes of the morning were refreshing, and seemed to foretell the approach of a beautiful day. Being accustomed, in my walks, to look for subjects of improving thought and association, I found them in every direction around me, as I hastened onwards to the house where Jane lay, waiting for a dismissal from her earthly dwelling.

I felt that the twilight gravity of nature was, at that hour, peculiarly appropriate to the circumstances of the case; and the more so, because that twilight was significantly adorned with the brilliant sparklings of the star on one hand, and the clear pale lustre of the waning moon on the other.

When I arrived at the house I found no one below; I paused a few minutes, and heard the girl's voice very faintly saying, "Do you think he will come? I should be so glad—so very glad to see him before I die."

I ascended the stairs—her father, mother, and brother, together with the elderly woman before spoken of, were in the chamber. Jane's countenance bore the marks of speedy dis-

solution. Yet, although death was manifest in the languid features, there was something more than ever interesting in the whole of her external aspect. The moment she saw me, a renewed vigour beamed in her eyes—grateful affection sparkled in the dying face.

Although she had spoken just before I entered, yet for some time afterwards she was silent, but never took her eyes off me. There was animation in her look—there was more—something like a foretaste of heaven seemed to be felt, and gave an inexpressible character of spiritual beauty, even in death.

At length she said, ‘This is very kind, Sir,—I am going fast—I was afraid I should never see you again in this world.’

I said, ‘My child, are you resigned to die?’

‘Quite.’

‘Where is your hope?’

She lifted up her finger, pointing to heaven, and then directed the same downward to her own heart, saying successively as she did so, ‘Christ there and Christ here’

These words, accompanied by the action, spoke her meaning more solemnly than can easily be conceived.

A momentary spasm took place.—Looking towards her weeping mother, she said, ‘I am very cold—but it is no matter—it will soon be over.’ She closed her eyes for about a minute, and, on opening them again said, ‘I wish, Sir, when I am gone, you would tell the other children of the parish, how good the Lord has been to me, a poor sinner—tell them, that they who seek him early will find him—tell them, that the ways of sin and ignorance are the ways to ruin and hell—and pray tell them, Sir, from me, that Christ is indeed the Way, the Truth, and the Life—he will in no wise cast out any that come. Tell them that I, a poor girl—’

She was quite exhausted, and sunk

for a while into a torpid state, from which, however, she recovered gradually, uttering these expressions:—“Where am I?—I thought I was going—Lord save me.”

‘My dear child, you will soon be for ever in his arms, who is now guiding you by his rod and staff through the valley of the shadow of death.’

‘I believe so, indeed I do,’ said she; ‘I long to be with him!—O how good, how great, how merciful!—Jesus, save me, help me through this last trial.’

She then gave one hand to her father, the other to her mother, and said, ‘God bless you, God bless you—seek the Lord—think of me, when I am gone—it may be for your good—remember your souls—O! for Christ’s sake remember your souls—then all may be well—you cannot know what I have felt for both of you—Lord, pardon and save my dear father and mother!’

She then took hold of her brother’s hand, saying, ‘Thomas, I beg of you to leave off your bad ways,—read the Bible—I give you mine—I have found it a precious book. Do you not remember our little brother, who died some years since?—he was praying to the last moment of his life. Learn to pray, while you are in health, and you will find the comfort and power of it when you come to die; but first of all, pray for a new heart—with-out it you never will see God in heaven—your present ways lead to misery and ruin—may the Lord turn your heart to love and follow him!’

To the other woman she said, ‘I thank you dame K—, for all your kindness, since I have been ill—you have been a Christian friend to me, and I hope the Lord will remember you for it, according to his rich mercy: you and I have many a time talked together about death; and though I am the youngest, he calls me first to pass through it, but, blessed be his name, I am not terrified. I once

thought I never could die without fear; but indeed I feel quite happy now it is come and so will you, if you trust him—he is the God both of the old and the young.'

'Ah, my child!' said the woman, 'I wish I was as fit to die as you are; but I fear that will never be—my sins have been many, very many.'

'Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin,' said the child.

At this moment, instead of growing weaker, through the fatigue of so much speaking, she seemed to gather fresh strength. She turned to me with a look of surprising earnestness and animation, saying,

"You, Sir, have been my best friend on earth—you have taught me the way to heaven, and I love and thank you for it—you have borne with my weakness and my ignorance—you have spoken to me of the love of Christ, and he has made me to feel it in my heart—I shall see him face to face—he will never leave me nor forsake me—he is the same, and changes not. Dear Sir, God bless you."

The child suddenly rose up, with an unexpected exertion, threw her livid wasted arms around me, as I sat on the bedside, laid her head on my shoulder, and said distinctly, 'God bless and reward you—give thanks for me to Him—my soul is saved—Christ is every thing to me. Sir, we shall meet in heaven, shall we not? O yes, yes—then all will be peace—peace—'

She sunk back on the bed, and spoke no more—fetched a deep sigh—smiled—and died.

At this affecting moment the first rays of the morning sun darted into the room, and filled my imagination with the significant emblem of "the tender mercy of God, whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

It was a beam of light, that seemed at once to describe the glorious change which her soul had now already experienced; and, at the same time, to shed the promised consolations of hope over the minds of those who witnessed her departure.

This was an incident obviously arising from a natural cause; but one which irresistibly connected itself with the spiritual circumstances of the case.

For some time I remained silently gazing on the breathless corpse, and could hardly persuade myself that Jane was indeed no longer there.

As I returned homeward, I found it difficult to repress the strong feelings of affection which such a scene had excited. Neither did I wish it. Religion, reason, and experience, rather bid us indulge, in due place and season, those tender emotions which keep the heart alive to its most valuable sensibilities. To check them, serves but to harden the mind and close the avenues which lead to the sources of our best principles of action.

Jesus himself *wept* over the foreseen sorrows of Jerusalem. He *wept* also at the grave of his friend Lazarus. Such an example consecrates the tear of affection, while it teaches us, "concerning them which are asleep, not to sorrow, as those which have no hope."

I soon fell into meditation on the mysterious subject of the flight of a soul from this world to that of departed spirits.

"Swifter than an arrow from the bow, or than the rays of light from the sun, has this child's spirit hastened, in obedience to its summons from God, to appear in his immediate presence. How solemn a truth is this for universal consideration! But, 'washed in the blood of the Lamb that was slain,' and happily made partaker of its purifying efficacy, she meets her welcome at the throne of God. She

has nothing to fear from the frowns of divine justice. Sin, death, and hell, are all vanquished through the power of Him who hath made her more than conqueror. He will himself present her to his Father, as one of the purchased lambs of his flock—as one whom the Spirit of God ‘has sealed unto the day of redemption’.

“What a change for her! from that poor tattered chamber to the regions of Paradise! from a bed of straw to the bosom of Abraham! from poverty, sickness, and pain, to eternal riches, health and joy! from the condition of a decayed weary pilgrim in this valley of tears, to that of a happy traveller safely arrived at home, in the rest that remaineth to the people of God!

“I have lost a young disciple, endeared to me by a truly parental tie. Yet how can I complain of that as lost which God has found? Her willing and welcome voice no longer seeks or imparts instruction here—But it is far better employed. The angels, who rejoiced over her when her soul first turned to God, who watched the progress of her short pilgrimage, and who have now carried her triumphantly to the heavenly hills, have already taught her to join

‘In holy song, their own immortal strains.’

Why then should I mourn? The whole prospect, as it concerns her, is filled with joy and immortality:—‘Death is swallowed up in victory’.”

As I looked upon the dew drops which rested on the grass and hung from the branches of the trees; I observed that the sun’s rays first filled them with beautiful and varied colours; then dried them up, and they were seen no longer.

Thus it was with myself. The tears which I neither would nor could restrain, when I first began thus to reflect on the image of the dying chamber of little Jane, were speedily

brightened by the vivid sunshine of hope and confidence. They then gradually yielded to the influence of that divine principle which shall finally wipe the tear from every eye, and banish all sorrow and sighing for evermore.

On the fourth day from thence, Jane was buried. I had never before committed a parishioner to the ground with similar affections. The attendants were not many, but I was glad to perceive among them some of the children who had been accustomed to receive my weekly private instruction along with her.

I wished that the scene might usefully impress their young hearts, and that God would bless it to their edification.

As I stood at the head of the grave during the service, I connected past events, which had occurred in the church yard, with the present. In this spot Jane first learned the value of that Gospel which saved her soul. Not many yards from her own burial place was the epitaph which has already been described as the first means of affecting her mind with serious and solemn conviction. It seemed to stand at this moment as a peculiar witness for those truths which its lines proclaimed to every passing reader. Such an association of objects produced a powerful effect on my thoughts.

The evening was serene—nothing occurred to interrupt the quiet solemnity of the occasion.

“Peace” was the last word little Jane uttered, while living; and peace seemed to be inscribed on the farewell scene at the grave, where she was laid. A grateful remembrance of that peace revives in my own mind, as I write these memorials of it; and O! may that peace which passeth all understanding be in its most perfect exercise, when I shall meet her again at the last day.

Attachment to the spot where this

young Christian lay, induced me to plant a yew-tree close by the head of her grave, adjoining the eastern wall of the church. I designed it as an evergreen monument of one who was dear to memory. The young plant appeared healthy for a while, and promised by its outward vigour long to retain its station. But it withered soon afterwards, and like the child whose grave it pointed out to notice, early faded away and died.

The yew-tree proved a frail and short-lived monument. But a more lasting one dwells in my own heart. And possibly this narrative may be permitted to transmit her memory to other generations, when the hand and heart of the writer shall be cold in the dust.

Perchance some, into whose hands these pages may fall, will be led to cultivate their spiritual young plants with increased hope of success, in so arduous an endeavour. May the tender blossoms reward their care, and bring forth early and acceptable fruit!

Some, who have perhaps been accustomed to undervalue the character of *very* youthful religion, may hereby see that the Lord of grace and glory is not limited in the exercise of his power by age or circumstance.—It sometimes appears in the displays of God's love to sinners, as it does in the manifestation of his works in the heavens, that the *least* of the planets moves in the nearest course to the sun, and there enjoys the most powerful influence of his light, heat, and attraction.

The story of this Young Cottager involves in a clear evidence of the freeness of the operations of divine grace on the heart of man; of the inseparable connexion between true faith and holiness of disposition; and of the simplicity of character which a real love of Christ transfuses into the soul.

How many of the household of faith, in every age,

"Alike unknown to fortune and to fame,"

have journeyed and are now travelling to their "city of habitation," through the paths of modest obscurity and almost unheeded piety! It is one of the most interesting employments of the Christian Minister to search out these spiritual hillies of the valley, whose beauty and fragrance are nearly concealed in their shady retreats. To rear the flower, to assist in unfolding its excellencies, and bring forth its fruit in due season, is a work that delightfully recompenses the toil of the cultivator.

While he is occupied in this grateful task of labouring in his heavenly Master's garden, some blight, some tempest may chance to take away a favourite young blossom, in a premature stage of its growth.

If such a case should befall him, he will then, perhaps, as I have often done, when standing in pensive recollection at little Jane's grave, make an application of these lines, which are inscribed on a gravestone erected in the same church-yard, and say,

"This lovely bud, so young and fair,
Call'd hence by early doom,
Just came to show how sweet a flower
In Paradise would bloom."

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Letters relative to a tour on the Continent, undertaken at the request of the committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in the year 1812, by the Rev. CH. FR. STEINKOPFF, M. A.

#### LETTER III.

Copenhagen, July 7, 1812.

*My Dear Friends,*

You have, I trust, duly received my letters from Gothenburg and Helsingburg. I can now inform you, that, by the goodness of God, I am arrived in safety at this capitol. I first visited Mr. Thorkelin, counsellor of state, and one of the Knights of the Danebrug order who is a native of

Iceland, a gentleman of taste and learning, and busily engaged in revising and correcting the Icelandic Bible now printing in this place. He has just completed the 20th sheet, and will do every thing to expedite the business.

At the same time I cannot but earnestly wish, that God may incline the heart of his Danish Majesty, to permit Mr. Henderson to spend the winter in Copenhagen; as his residence on the spot would in every way be conducive to the accomplishment of the work, and the best interests of our society. Mr. Thorkelin tells me, that only four editions of the whole Icelandic Bible have been published, namely:

I in the year 1584, folio, (1000 copies.)  
 I - - - - - 1644, ditto, (1000 ditto.)  
 I - - - - - 1728, ditto, (very faulty.)  
 I - - - - - 1747, quarto, (500 copies.  
 of all which he thinks scarcely one hundred copies remain in the whole island.

Of the Icelandic new testament he showed me three editions, viz. those of 1545, 1608, and 1750.

Of the 5000 copies of the Icelandic new testament, part of which was printed at the expense of a benevolent Danish society, (the Fuhnen) and the other at ours, about 1700 copies have been sent (bound) to Iceland, where they were received with eagerness and gratitude. Of the remainder, several hundred copies are already bound; the rest I ordered to be got ready as soon as possible, that Mr. Henderson may take them with him, in case he should obtain permission to proceed to Iceland.

With regard to the 50*l.* voted by our society for the benefit of poor Danish families which are destitute of the scriptures; Mr. Bosen, a trusty and excellent man, has purchased out of this money 66 Bibles and 500 Testaments, part of which he has sent to Norway, Fuhnen, and Jutland; and will soon dispose of the rest in a similar manner.

Mr. Thorkelin introduced me to Bishop Munter; who, as bishop of Zealand, holds the first rank among the twelve Danish bishops. He is a man of extensive learning and great urbanity of manners; he excels in biblical literature, and possesses one of the best collections of Bibles in different languages. When I simply related what our society had done, and showed him some specimens, he expressed equal astonishment and pleasure; still more was he pleased, when I presented him with a copy of our new testament in the ancient and modern Greek. He showed me every scarce and interesting bible in his possession. Among them I notice a few, viz.

An Armenian bible, Amsterdam, 1666;  
 a second, 1698

A Virginian ditto, Cambridge, 1685.

A Finish ditto, - - - - - 1685.

The Creol new testament, Copenhagen, 1781.

Two editions of the Ethiopic psalms,  
 one printed in Rome, the other  
 Ludlolf's edition.

The two oldest Danish testaments, one  
 translated from the Vulgate in 1524,  
 the other from Luther's version in  
 1531.

I asked him, whether it might not be possible to procure some of those editions for our library, and also some Hebrew and Latin bibles, the Septuagint, &c. He replied, "A few perhaps might be got, but all of them, even the latter, were very scarce in Copenhagen." I requested Mr. Thorkelin to purchase what he could.

The Bishop expressed to me his grateful sense of the benefit, which both our society and that for promoting christian knowledge, had conferred on the Danish prisoners of war; the former by printing for them the Danish new testament, the other by printing the Danish psalm-book. He also signified his wish, to obtain a copy of our Danish testament for every one of the twelve Danish Bishops, and as many of the Society's editions for

**Himself** ~~ought~~ conveniently be spared. I left him a specimen of Mr. Morrison's translation of St. Luke in Chinese, which pleased him so much, that he said he would show it to the Synod of the Zealand clergy, convened for Wednesday.

From the Bishop, I proceeded with Mr. Thorkelin to the royal library; where I deposited, in the name of our society, a copy of the ancient and modern Greek testament, a copy of St. John's gospel in the Eskimaux language, and a copy of the Arabic bible.

The librarians present expressed their obligation to the society in strong terms, admiring particularly that generous spirit, which, in the midst of war, knew of no war. They also earnestly requested, that a complete set of all the Society's editions might be sent to the royal library, as soon as circumstances would permit.

I endeavoured to obtain accurate information on the question, "Are the scriptures actually wanting among the poor of the Danish dominions; and to what extent?" As to the Icelandick bible, the point is decided—a real want of it exists; it also appears that many of the German inhabitants of Copenhagen are without bibles. The Rev. Mr. Gericke, a respectable German minister in this city who had been twenty years chaplain to the Danish embassy in Paris, stated to me, that several Germans had applied to him for bibles, but that he had been unable to supply them.

In regard to Danish bibles, the accounts differ much: while a young active clergyman of this town boldly and firmly asserted, that not more than one in ten possessed a bible; several truly respectable and aged clergymen expressed their conviction, that almost every family in Copenhagen was supplied with one or more copies of the bible; and that, though in the country some of the poor were cer-

tainly destitute of the scriptures, their number was not very considerable.— Thus at least, they added, we found it in our younger days, though we allow that now some deterioration may have taken place, on account of the total disregard in which this Sacred book is held by many. Both bishop Munter and bishop Ball agreed in the statement, that a considerable number of their poor would be found without a bible, while they lamented that there was so little apparent desire to obtain it.

I visited yesterday a most respectable nobleman, Baron Mesting, who is President of the German chancery for Holstein and Sleswick, a friend of the bible and of all religious people. He lamented that so many slighted and even despised the bible; rejoiced at what was doing in Great-Britain and other parts of the world, for the propagation and circulation of the holy scriptures; stated that an edition of the bible was now printing in Altona; and expressed a hope that something might be done in Holstein and Sleswick.

Bishop Ball, whom I likewise visited, and to whom I have already referred, is a venerable old man of 73; he was 25 years bishop of Zealand, but obliged to resign, in consequence of various infirmities attendant on his advanced age. He has been a most active champion of Christianity; and when the bible was attacked in a periodical work, called *Jesus and Reason*, he stood boldly forward in defence of it by the celebrated publication, "The bible its own defence"— When I told him of the establishment, the exertions, and the success of the bible society, the good old man seemed full of holy joy; he took my hands, pressed them, and thanked me over and over again, that I had come to see him, and brought him such good news. I must now conclude; farewell, I proceed to Altona.

To be continued.